



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE  
**TWO FELONS SENTENCED FOR ILLEGAL  
POSSESSION OF FIREARMS**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that an Ava, Mo., man and an Arkansas man were sentenced in federal court today, in separate and unrelated cases, for being felons in possession of a firearm. Today's sentencings, Graves said, mark additional progress under Project Ceasefire, the district's ongoing anti-crime initiative.

\* **Michael W. Johnson**, 36, of Ava, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner this morning to 21 years and 10 months in federal prison without parole.

On Oct. 29, 2003, **Johnson** was found guilty by a federal jury of four counts charging him with several firearms violations. **Johnson** was found guilty of being a felon in possession of a .30-06 caliber Remington rifle on Jan. 14 and 15, 2002, in Douglas County. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Johnson** has 1986 criminal felony convictions for stealing and second degree burglary, 1988 criminal felony convictions for second degree robbery and first degree tampering, and a 1997 criminal felony conviction for stealing. **Johnson's** prior criminal convictions qualified him as an armed career criminal, which enhanced his overall sentence.

In addition to the felon in possession of a firearm conviction, **Johnson** also was convicted of a second count of being a felon in possession of a Marlin .22 magnum caliber rifle and ammunition, possessing a stolen firearm, and possessing methamphetamine on April 29, 2003, in Douglas County.

**Johnson** used the Remington rifle in two drive-by shootings on a single victim on the night of Jan. 15, 2002, Graves said. After the second drive-by shooting **Johnson** was involved in a lengthy chase involving law enforcement officers, where he attempted to get rid of the rifle.

**Johnson** was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on July 9, 2003, in Springfield.

This case was prosecuted by Deputy U.S. Attorney Michael A. Jones. It was investigated by the Douglas County, Mo., Sheriff's Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

\* **Brian Kelly**, 39, of Harrison, Ark., was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner this morning to two years and six months in federal prison without parole.

On Oct. 16, 2003, **Kelly** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. By pleading guilty, **Kelly** admitted that he was in possession of a Glock 9 mm handgun on April 9, 2003, in Vernon County, Mo. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Kelly** has two 1990 criminal felony convictions for burglary and theft of property.

**Kelly** was originally charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Sept. 10, 2003, in Springfield.

This case was prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Douglas D. Gaston. It was investigated by the Vernon County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

#### **Project Ceasefire**

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets for federal prosecution persons who unlawfully use or possess firearms.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)